



VIRGINIA OUTDOORS FOUNDATION

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203 Governor Street, Suite 316
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Open-Space Lands

Preservation

Trust Fund



THE OPEN-SPACE LANDS PRESERVATION TRUST FUND

FARMLAND, FOREST LAND AND OPEN-SPACE LANDS are important to our heritage in Virginia. These lands are under increasing pressure from urban development in many parts of the Commonwealth.

The 1997 Virginia General Assembly created a new fund (Va. Code Sections 10.1801-2) to assist landowners with the costs of conveying CONSERVATION EASEMENTS and to purchase all or part of the value of easements.

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS preserve farmland, forest land, and natural and recreational areas by restricting intensive uses, such as development and mining, which would alter the conservation values of the land.

An easement is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and a public body or conservation group in which the parties agree to protect the open-space and natural resource values of the land.

Each easement is tailored to reflect the conservation values of the property and is recorded in the local courthouse as a permanent part of the property records. Easements do not grant public access to a landowner's property.

Priorities for Funding:

- *Cost reimbursement only
- *Financial need
- *Family farm/forest

Costs the fund may reimburse:

- *legal costs
- *appraisal and other costs
- *all or part of the easement value

The easements must be perpetual in duration

WHO HOLDS THE EASEMENT?

The easements receiving Preservation Trust Fund allocations are conveyed to the *Virginia Outdoors Foundation* and a local co-holder. VOF was established in 1966 by the General Assembly to conserve and protect Virginia's scenic, scientific, natural, historic, recreational, and open-space areas for the public's benefit.

Valid co-holders include local government entities, Soil and Water Conservation Districts and conservation organizations such as The Nature Conservancy and Land Trust of Virginia, and regional groups such as Chesapeake Bay Foundation, James River Association, Friends of Dragon Run, and Williamsburg Land Conservancy in the Bay Region; Valley Conservation Council in the Shenandoah Valley, and Piedmont Environmental Council in the northern Piedmont Region.

HOW TO APPLY

Application forms are available from any Virginia Outdoors Foundation office (see reverse side) and should be returned to the VOF office in Richmond. Regional Advisory Boards appointed by the Governor review applications and recommend to VOF's Trustees applications for funding on a competitive basis.

DOES MY LAND QUALIFY?

The Virginia Outdoors Foundation's staff, Board of Trustees, and the co-holder evaluate each potential easement for its scenic, scientific, natural, historic, recreational or open-space value using VOF's Guidelines. These Guidelines recommend a maximum overall density of principal residences and a maximum number of divisions based on the size of the property.

